3.

SIR ELDRED

OF THE

BOWER;

A LEGENDARY TALE,

IN TWO PARTS,

BY HANNAH MORE.

AND

EDWIN AND EMMA:

BY MR. MALLET.

MANCHESTER,
printed and sold
By G. Bancks, Exchange-ſtreet:
sold also
By Lee and Hurſt, Pater-noſter Row, London.

BRITISH MUSEUM

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

PART FIRST.

O nostra Vita ch'e si bella in vista!
Com' perde agevolmente in une momento,
Quel, ch'en molt' anni a grand penas' acquista!
PETRARCA.

THERE was a young and valiant knight,
Sir ELDRED was his name,
And never did a worthier wight,
The rank of knighthood claim.

Where gliding *Tay* her stream sends forth,
To feed the neigbouring wood,
The ancient glory of the North,
SIR ELDRED'S castle stood.

The youth was rich as youth might be
In patrimonial dower;
And many a noble seat had he
Atchieved in hall and bower.

He did not think, as some have thought,
Whom honor never crown'd,
The fame a father dearly bought
Could make the son renown'd.

He better thought, a nobler sire,
Who gallant deeds had done,
To deeds of hardihood should fire
A brave and gallant son.

The fairest ancestry on earth
Without desert is poor;
And every deed of lofty worth
Is but a claim for more.

Sir Eldred's heart was good and kind,
Alive to Pity's call;
A croud of virtues grac'd his mind,
He lov'd and felt for all.

When *merit* rais'd the sufferer's name,
He shower'd his bounty *then*;
And those who could not prove that claim,
He succour'd still as *men*.

But sacred truth the Muse compels
His errors to impart:
And yet the Muse reluctant tells
The fault of Eldred's heart.

Tho' kind and gentle as the dove,
As free from guilt and art,
And mild, and soft as infant love,
The feelings of his heart,

Yet, if the passions storm'd his soul,
By jealousy led on,
The whirlwind rage disdained controul,
And bore his virtues down.

Not Thule's waves so wildly break
To drown the northern shore;
Nor Etna's entrails fiercer shake,
Or Scythia's tempests roar.

As when on summer's sweetest day,
To fan the fragrant morn,
The sighing breezes softly stray
O'er fields of ripen'd corn;

Sudden the lightning's blast descends,
  Deforms the ravag'd fields;
At once the various ruin blends,
  And all resistless yields.

But when, to clear his stormy breast,
  The sun of reason shone,
And ebbing passions sunk to rest,
  And shew'd what rage had done;

O then what anguish he betray'd!
  His shame how deep, how true!
He view'd the waste his rage had made,
  And shudder'd at the view.

The meek ey'd dawn, in saffron robe,
  Proclaim'd the opening day:
Up rose the sun to gild the globe,
  And hail the new-born May;

The birds their vernal notes repeat,
  And glad the thick'ning grove,
And feather'd partners fondly greet
  With many a song of love;

When pious ELDRED walk'd abroad
  His morning vows to pay,
And hail the universal Lord,
  Who gave the goodly day.

That done--he left his woodland glade,
  And journey'd far away:
He lov'd to court the stranger shade,
  And thro' the lone vale stray.

Within the bosom of a wood,
  By circling hills embrac'd,
A little modest mansion stood,
  Built by the hand of taste.

While many a prouder castle fell,
This safely did endure;
The house where guardian virtues dwell
Is sacred, and secure.

Of Eglantine an humble fence
Around the mansion stood,
Which charm'd at once the ravish'd sense,
And screen'd an infant wood.

The wood receiv'd an added grace,
As pleas'd it bent to look,
And view'd its ever-verdant face
Reflected in a brook.

The smallness of the stream did well
The master's fortune shew;
But little streams may serve to tell
From what a source they flow.

This mansion own'd an aged Knight;
And such a man was he,
As heaven just shews to human sight
To tell what man should be.

His youth in many a well fought field
Was train'd betimes to war;
His bosom, like a well worn shield,
Was grac'd with many a scar.

The vigour of a green old age
His reverend form did bear;
And yet, alas! the warrior sage
Had drain'd the dregs of care;

And sorrow more than age can break,
And wound its hapless prey;
'Twas sorrow furrow'd his firm cheek,
And turn'd his bright locks grey.

One darling daughter sooth'd his cares,
A young and beauteous dame;
Sole comfort of his failing years,
And BIRTHA was her name.

Her heart a little sacred shrine,
Where all the virtues meet;
And holy hope and faith divine,
Had claim'd it for their seat.

She rear'd a fair and fragrant bower
Of wild and rustic taste,
And there she screen'd each fav'rite flower
From every ruder blast.

And not a shrub or plant was there
But did some moral yield;
For wisdom, by a father's care,
Was found in every field.

The trees whose foliage fell away,
And with the summer died,
He thought, an image of decay,
Might lecture human pride;

While fair perennial greens that stood,
And brav'd the wintry blast,
As types of the fair mind he view'd
Which shall for ever last.

He taught her that the gaudiest flowers
Were seldom fragrant found,
But wasted, soon their little powers
Lay useless on the ground;

While the sweet scented rose shall last,
And boast its fragrant power,
When life's imperfect day is past,
And beauty's shorter hour.

And here the virgin lov'd to lead
Her inoffensive day,
And here she oft retir'd to read,
And oft retir'd to pray.

Embower'd she grac'd the woodland shades,
From courts and cities far,
The pride of Caledonian maids,
The peerless northern star.

As shines that bright and blazing star,
The glory of the night,
When sailing thro' the cloudless air
She sheds her silver light:

So BIRTHA shone!—But when she spoke,
The muse herself was heard,
As on the ravish'd air she broke,
And thus her prayer preferr'd.

"O bless thy Birtha, Power Supreme,
In whom I live and move,
And bless me most by blessing him
Whom more than life I love."

She starts to hear a stranger's voice,
And with a modest grace
She lifts her meek eyes in surprize,
And sees a stranger's face.

The stranger lost in transport stood,
Bereft of voice and pow'r,
While she with equal wonder view'd
SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

The virgin blush which spreads her cheek
With Nature's purest dye,
And all those dazzling beams which break
Like morning from her eye:

He view'd them all, and as he view'd,
Drank deeply of delight;
And still his raptur'd eye pursu'd,
And feasted on the sight.

With silent wonder long they gaz'd,
And neither silence broke;
At length the smother'd passion blaz'd;
Enamour'd ELDRED spoke—

"O sacred virtue, heavenly power!
Thy wondrous force I feel;
I gaze, I tremble, I adore,
Yet die my love to tell.

"My scorn has oft the dart repell'd
Which guileful beauty threw,
But goodness heard, and grace beheld,
Must every heart subdue."

Quick on the ground her eyes were cast,
And now as quickly rais'd:
Her father haply that way past,
On whom she trembling gaz'd.

Good Ardolph's eye his Birtha meets
With glances of delight,
And thus with courteous speech he greets,
The young and graceful knight;

"O gallant youth, whoe'er thou art,
Thou art welcome to this place;
There's something rises at my heart,
Which says I've seen that face."

"Thou generous knight," the youth rejoin'd,
"Tho' little known to fame,
I trust I bear a grateful mind—
Sir ELDRED is my name."

"Sir ELDRED?" ARDOLPH loud exclaim'd,
"Renown'd for worth and power?
For valour and for virtue fam'd,
Sir ELDRED OF THE BOWER?

"Now make me grateful, righteous heaven,
As thou art good to me,
Since to my aged eyes 'tis given
Sir ELDRED's son to see!

Then ARDOLPH caught him by the hand,
And gaz'd upon his face,
And to his aged bosom strain'd,
With many a kind embrace.

Again he view'd him o'er and o'er,
And doubted still the truth,
And ask'd what he had ask'd before,
Then thus address'd the youth---

"Come now beneath my roof I pray,
Some needful rest to take,
And with us many a cheerful day,
Thy friendly sojourn make."

He enter'd at the gate straitway,
Some needful rest to take,
And with them many a cheerful day
Did friendly sojourn make.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

SIR ELDRED OF THE BOWER.

PART SECOND.

ONCE---'twas on a summer's walk,
The gaudy day was fled;
They cheated Time with cheerful talk,
When thus Sir ARDOLPH said:

"Thy father was the firmest friend
That e'er my being blest?
And every virtue Heaven could send,
Fast bound him to my breast.

"Together did we learn to bear
The casque and ample shield;
Together learn'd in many a war,
The deathful spear to wield.

"To make our union still more dear,
We both were doom'd to prove,
What is most sweet and most severe
In heart dissolving love.

"The daughter of a neighbouring Knight
Did *my* fond heart engage;
And ne'er did Heaven the virtues write
Upon a fairer page.

"*His* bosom felt an equal wound,
Nor sigh'd we long in vain:
One summer's sun beheld us bound
In Hymen's holy chain.

"Thou wast Sir ELDRED's only child,
Thy father's darling joy;
On me a lovely daughter smil'd,
On me a blooming boy.

"But man has woes, has clouds of care,
That dim his star of life——
My arms receiv'd the little pair,
The earth's cold breast my wife.

"Forgive, thou gentle Knight, forgive,
Fond foolish tears will flow;
One day like mine thy heart may grieve,
And mourn its lot of woe.

"But grant, kind Heaven! thou ne'er may'st know
The pangs I now impart;
Nor ever feel the deadly blow
That rives a husband's heart.

"Beside the blooming banks of *Tay*,
My angel's ashes sleep;
And wherefore should her ARDOLPH stay,
Except to watch and weep?

"I bore my beauteous babes away
With many a gushing tear,
I left the blooming banks of *Tay*,
And brought my darlings here.

"I watch'd my little household cares,
And form'd their growing youth;
And fondly train'd their infant years
To love and cherish truth."

"Thy blooming BIRTHA here I see,"
Sir ELDRED strait rejoin'd;
"But why thy son is not with thee,
Resolve my doubting mind."

When BIRTHA did the question hear,
She sigh'd but could not speak;
And many a soft and silent tear,
Stray'd down her damask cheek.

Then pass'd o'er good Sir ARDOLPH's face,
A cast of deadly pale;
But soon compos'd, with manly grace
He thus renew'd his tale:

"For him my heart too much has bled,
For him, my darling son,
Has sorrow prest my hoary head;
But Heaven's high will be done:

"Scarce eighteen winters had revolv'd,
To crown the circling year,
Before my valiant boy resolv'd
The warrior's lance to bear.

"Too high I priz'd my native land,
Too dear his fame I held,
T' oppose a parent's stern command,
And keep him from the field.

"He left me---left his sister too,
Yet tears bedew'd his face---
What could a feeble old man do?---
He burst from my embrace.

"O think of glory, fatal flame?
O laurels dearly bought?
Yet sweet is death when earn'd with fame---
So virtuous EDWY thought.

"Full manfully the brave boy strove,
Tho' pressing ranks oppose;
But weak the strongest arm must prove
Against an host of foes.

"A deadly wound my son receives,
A spear assails his side:
Grief does not kill---for ARDOLPH lives
To tell that EDWY died.

"His long lov'd mother died again
In EDWY's parting groan;
I wept for her, yet wept in vain---
I wept for both in one.

"I would have died---I sought to die;
But Heaven restrained the thought,
And to my passion-clouded eye
My helpless BIRTHA brought.

"When lo! array'd in robes of light,
A nymph celestial came;
She clear'd the mists that dimm'd my sight--
RELIGION was her name.

"She prov'd the chastisement divine,
And bade me kiss the rod;
She taught this rebel heart of mine
Submission to its God.

"RELIGION taught me to sustain
What nature bade me feel;
And piety reliev'd the pain
Which time can never heal.

He ceas'd---with sorrow and delight
The tale Sir ELDRED hears,
Then weeping cries---"Thou noble Knight,
For thanks accept my tears.

"O ARDOLPH, might I dare aspire
To claim so bright a boon;
Good old Sir ELDRED was my sire---
And thou hast lost a son.

"And tho' I want a worthier plea
To urge so dear a cause;
Yet, let me to thy bosom be
What once thy EDWY was.

"My trembling tongue its aid denies,
For thou may'st disapprove;
Then read it in my ardent eyes,
Oh! read the tale of love.

"Thy beauteous BIRTHA!"—"Gracious Power,
How could I e'er repine,"
Cries ARDOLPH, "since I see this hour?
Yes——BIRTHA shall be thine."

A little transient gleam of red
Shot faintly o'er her face,
And every trembling feature spread
With sweet disordered grace.

The tender father kindly smil'd
With fulness of content,
And fondly ey'd his darling child,
Who, bashful, blush'd consent.

O then to pain the vast delight
That fill'd Sir ELDRED's heart,
To tell the transports of the Knight,
Wou'd mock the Muse's art.

But every kind and gracious soul,
Where gentle passions dwell,
Will better far conceive the whole,
Than any Muse can tell.

The more the Knight his BIRTHA knew,
The more he priz'd the maid;
Some worth each day produc'd to view,
Some grace each hour betray'd.

The virgin too was fond to charm
The dear accomplish'd youth;
His single breast she strove to warm,
And crown'd with love his truth.

Unlike the dames of modern days,
Who *general* homage claim,
Who court the *universal* gaze,
And pant for *public* fame.

Then Beauty but on merit smil'd,
Nor were her chaste smiles sold
No venal father gave his child
For grandeur or for gold.

The ardour of young ELDRED's flame
But ill cou'd brook delay,
And oft he press'd the maid to name
A speedy nuptial day.

The fond impatience of his breast
'Twas all in vain to hide,
But she his eager suit represt
With modest maiden pride.

When oft Sir ELDRED press'd the day
Which was to crown her truth,
The thoughtful Sire would sigh, and say,
"O happy state of youth!

"It little recks the woes which wait
To scare its dreams of joy,
Nor thinks to-morrow's alter'd fate
May all those dreams destroy.

"And tho' the flatterer, Hope, deceives,
And painted prospects shews;
Yet man still cheated, still believes
Till death the bright scene close.

" She look'd my bride, so sweetly mild,
On me her beauty's slave;
But whilst she look'd, and whilst she smil'd,
She sunk into the grave.

" Yet, O forgive an old man's care,
Forgive a father's zeal:
Who fondly loves must greatly fear,
Who fears must greatly feel.

" Once more in soft and sacred bands
Shall Love and Hymen meet;
To-morrow shall unite your hands,
And——be your bliss complete!"

The rising sun inflam'd the sky,
The golden orient blush'd,
But BIRTHA's cheeks a sweeter die,
A brighter crimson flush'd.

The Priest, in milk-white vestments clad,
Perform'd the mystic rite:
Love lit the hallow'd torch that led
To Hymen's chaste delight.

How feeble language were to speak
Th' immeasurable joy,
That fir'd Sir ELDRED's ardent cheek,
And triumph'd in his eye!

Sir ARDOLPH's pleasure stood confest,
A pleasure all his own;
The guarded rapture of a breast
Which many a grief had known.

'Twas such a sober sense of joy
As Angels well might keep;
A joy chastis'd by piety,
A joy prepar'd to weep.

To recollect her scatter'd thought,
And shun the noon-tide hour,
The lovely bride in secret sought
The coolness of her bower.

Long she remain'd——th' enamour'd Knight,
Impatient at her stay,
And all unfit to taste delight
When BIRTHA was away,

Betakes him to the secret Bower;
His footsteps softly move;
Impell'd by every tender power,
He steals upon his love.

O horror! horror! blasting sight!
He sees his BIRTHA's charms,
Reclin'd with melting fond delight,
Within a stranger's arms.

Wild frenzy fires his frantic hand,
Distracted at the sight,
He flies to where the lovers stand,
And stabs the stranger Knight.

"Die, traitor, die, thy guilty flames
Demand th' avenging steel"---
"It is my brother, she exclaims,
'Tis EDWY---Oh farewell!"

An aged peasant, EDWY's guide,
The good old ARDOLPH sought;
He told him that his bosom's pride,
His EDWY, he had brought.

O how the father's feelings melt!
How faint and how revive!
Just so the Hebrew Patriarch felt,
To find his son alive.

" Let me behold my darling's face,
And bless him ere I die!
Then with a swift and vigorous pace,
He to the Bower did hie.

O sad reverse!—sunk on the ground
His slaughter'd son he view'd,
And dying BIRTHA close he found
In brother's blood imbru'd.

Cold, speechless, senseless, ELDRED near
Gaz'd on the deed he'd done;
Like the blank statue of *Despair*,
Or *Madness* grav'd in stone.

The father saw—so Jepthah stood,
So turn'd his woe-fraught eye,
When the dear, destin'd child he view'd,
His zeal had doom'd to die.

He look'd; the woe he could not speak,
And on the pale corse prest
His wan, discolour'd, dying cheek,
And silent sunk to rest.

Then BIRTHA faintly rais'd her eye,
Which long had ceas'd to stream,
On ELDRED fix'd with many a sigh
Its dim, departing beam.

The cold, cold dews of hastening death
Upon her pale face stand;
And quick and short her failing breath,
And tremulous her hand.

The cold, cold dews of hastening death,
The dim departing eye,
The quivering hand, the short quick breath
He view'd—and did not die.

He saw her spirit mount in air,
Its kindred skies to seek!
His heart its anguish could not bear,
And yet it would not break.

The mournful Muse forbears to tell
How wretched ELDRED died:
She draws the Grecian * Painter's veil,
The vast distress to hide.

Yet Heaven's decrees are just and wise,
And man is born to bear;
Joy is the portion of the skies,
Beneath them, all is care.

* In the celebrated Picture of the Sacrifice of Iphigenia, Timanthes having exhausted every image of grief in the by-standers, threw a veil over the face of the father, whose sorrow he was utterly unable to express. PLIN. Book xxxv.

EDWIN AND EMMA.

BY MR. MALLET.

FAR in the windings of a vale,
Fast by a sheltering wood,
The safe retreat of Health and Peace,
An humble cottage ſtood.

There beauteous *Emma* flourish'd fair,
Beneath a mother's eye;
Whose only wish on earth was now,
To see her blest, and die.

The ſoftest blush that nature spreads
Gave colour to her cheek:
Such orient colour smiles thro' heaven
When May's sweet mornings break.

Nor let the pride of great ones scorn
This charmer of the plains:
That sun who bids their diamond blaze,
To paint our lilly deigns.

Long had she fill'd each youth with love,
Each maiden with despair;
And tho' by all a wonder own'd,
Yet knew not she was fair.

Till *Edwin* came, the pride of swains,
A soul that knew no art;
And from whose eye, serenely mild,
Shone forth the feeling heart.

A mutual flame was quickly caught,
Was quickly too reveal'd;
For neither bosom lodg'd a wish,
That virtue keeps conceal'd.

What happy hours of home-felt bliss
Did love on both bestow!
But bliss too mighty long to last,
Where fortune proves a foe.

His sister, who, like Envy form'd,
Like her in mischief joy'd,
To work them harm, with wicked skill,
Each darker art employ'd.

The father too, a sordid man,
Who love nor pity knew,
Was all-unfeeling as the clod,
From whence his riches grew.

Long had he seen their secret flame,
And seen it long unmov'd:
Then with a father's frown at last
Had sternly disapprov'd.

In *Edwin's* gentle heart, a war
Of different passions strove——
His heart, that durst not disobey,
Yet could not cease to love.

Deny'd her sight, he oft behind
The spreading hawthorn crept,
To snatch a glance, to mark the spot,
Where *Emma* walk'd and wept.

Oft too on *Stanemore's* wintry waste,
Beneath the moonlight-shade,
In sighs to pour his soften'd soul,
The midnight-mourner stray'd.

His cheek, where health with beauty glow'd,
A deadly pale o'ercast:
So fades the fresh rose in its prime,
Before the northern blast.

The parents now, with late remorse,
Hung o'er his dying bed;
And weary'd heaven with fruitless vows,
And fruitless sorrow shed.

'Tis past! he cry'd---but if your souls
Sweet mercy yet can move,
Let these dim eyes once more behold,
What they must ever love!

She came; his cold hand softly touch'd,
And bath'd with many a tear:
Fast-falling o'er the primrose pale,
So morning-dews appear.

But oh! his sister's jealous care
A cruel sister she!
Forbade what *Emma* came to say——
"My *Edwin*, live for me."

Now homeward as she hopeless wept
The church-yard path along,
The blast blew cold, the dark owl scream'd
Her lover's funeral song.

Amid the falling gloom of night,
Her startling fancy found
In every bush his hovering shade,
His groan in every sound.

Alone, appal'd, thus had she past
The visionary vale---
When lo! the death-bell smote her ear,
Sad-sounding in the gale!

Just then she reach'd, with trembling step,
Her aged mother's door---
He's gone! she cry'd; and I shall see
That angel-face no more!

I feel, I feel this breaking heart
Beat high against my side---
From her white arm down sunk her head;
She shivering sigh'd, and died.

BRITISH
7 AP 91
MUSEUM